

**Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee-Work Session
Friday, May 6, 2011
Superintendent's Conference Room
111 Peirce Street
East Greenwich, RI 02818**

ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA MAY BE SUBJECT TO A VOTE

5:12p.m.

The work session of the East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the Superintendent's Conference Room at 5:12 p.m. by Vice-Chair, Mr. Robert Durant. Those in attendance were: Mr. David Green, Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, Mr. Jack Sommer, and Mrs. Susan Records (arrived 5:25pm.). Chair Dr. Deidre Gifford was present via teleconference. Mr. Paul Martin was absent. Superintendent Dr. Victor Mercurio, Director of Administration Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Student Services Mrs. Paula Dillon, and Director of Athletics Mr. Christopher Cobain were also present.

The purpose of the work session was to discuss potential budget reductions for FY2012. Mrs. Crawford discussed the current proposed reductions of \$713,713.00 and explained additional revenues that are expected including State Aid, Jobs Bill Funding, and Fund Balance totaling \$287,287.00.

Mrs. Crawford discussed additional expense cuts including an additional teacher retirement and reductions in athletics, professional development, facilities, school budgets, textbooks, mail delivery, retiree health, and Blue Cross. Professional development dollars can be cut by an additional \$25,000 (total \$50,000) due to Race to the Top Funding which totals \$101,472, Title II funds which equal \$128,000, and course reimbursement equaling \$35,000. For the past two years, the district has been spending 65-70% of the \$106,000 that was allocated for professional development. Mrs. Dillon noted Race to the Top dollars will be used first for professional development (based on guidelines. A one-time use of fund balance dollars (\$50,000) can be used for facilities for FY2012, \$35,000 for FY2013, and \$15,000 for FY2014. Athletics will receive \$10,000 for FY2012 from the fund balance. Retiree health will be reduced by \$4,000 and Blue Cross by \$109,000. The finance "other tech services" can be taken out of the finance budget (\$5,212). The facilities advertisement line, which is used for bids, can be reduced by \$5,000 based on current spending. If the state allows the district to post notices electronically only (reducing newspaper ads), additional dollars will be saved. Mail delivery will be reduced from 5 days to 3 days per week saving \$5,000 for the year. Dr. Mercurio spoke with school administration budget owners and they are comfortable with a total reduction of \$30,000.

Mr. Cobain discussed his proposed budget and the effect level-funding would have on athletics. Proposed bus transportation for the high school is \$72,000 and \$16,000 for Cole. Mr. Cobain discussed transportation and noted the bus proposal is based on the number of games the district is obliged to play plus one additional bus in case of playoffs. The trainer's hours also need to be increased from 20 to 30 hours per week. The trainer has to manage "return to play" protocol on a daily basis due to interscholastic league mandates. The current trainer has met with approximately 25 students this year to manage their recovery. Additional hours will be consumed by testing and re-testing to make sure students can return. There is also the "concussion mandate" which will necessitate additional hours.

The need for an additional football coach is based on the growing number of students playing (approximately 65). Lacrosse has also seen an increase in players (especially freshman girls). While volunteers are helpful, the district needs the consistency of a hired coach. Mr. Cobain stated he is not comfortable cutting transportation and will make cuts in equipment. The Committee discussed track equipment including pole vault, high jump, and hurdle equipment. Pole vault equipment still needs to be ordered and may be purchased next year through fund balance dollars. Mr. Cobain discussed hosting track meets and the possible financial incentives to the booster club and the athletic department. Mr. Green questioned whether there is a limit to the number of students in each sport. At this time there is not a limit, but there are constraints due to playing time.

Dr. Gifford noted it will be a challenge to defend an increase in football coaches when educational cuts are being proposed. Dr. Mercurio discussed other areas that can be addressed such as chorus and the elimination of an elementary principal at either Hanaford or Eldredge which could save \$110,000 per year. Mrs. Dillon discussed the ramifications of reducing a building principal which include safety issues. She also reminded the Committee of the considerable time she spent at Meadowbrook when there was a principal vacancy. This took her away from her primary responsibilities as Director of Student Services. Dr. Mercurio explained that Mrs. Dillon also performs work beyond the scope of her current position and is able to because all building principal positions are filled.

The Committee discussed the option of moving chorus from a full day position to a stipend position. Mr. Durant prefers to make changes to chorus before eliminating a Principal. Dr. Mercurio noted further reductions may necessitate cutting administration positions, reducing high school offerings, and leaving the Director of Technology position unfilled. Mr. Durant discussed possible options and noted reducing chorus will affect the least amount of students. Mrs. Crawford noted the upcoming music teacher retirement and possible change in chorus from a full time position to a stipend could result in \$90,000 savings. Dr. Mercurio noted the chorus change will affect approximately twelve students after school. The Committee would like to see the chorus student load to make a determination.

Mrs. Crawford stated the need to look at workshops and conference for reductions. Dr. Mercurio stated non-negotiable cuts are administration positions such as Principal and Director of Technology. Mr. Sommer questioned whether the two technology staff members are negotiable and whether NEIT can provide internships as a pilot program. Mr. Green discussed the current EGHS course loads and questioned various sections and whether they should run based on current student load. Mr. Durant would like to maintain programs, but suggests speaking to union leadership for assistance in adding students to a session, rather than reducing a teacher. He also suggests the district look at chorus and a technology department reconfiguration.

Mr. Durant will call the Town Council President with a final budget number as they are voting on Monday, May 9, 2011. On a motion by Mr. Sommer, which was seconded by Mr. Green, the committee voted (5-0) to adjourn at 6:35p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY